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The Collector and Art Critic

A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE ARTS
AND CRAFTS, BIBLIOGRAPHY, ETC.

VOL. IV. No. 3.

JANUARY, 1906. TWENTY CENTS THE COPY.

WANTED.—To purchase a fine example by A. H. WYANT. Address
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Let the kind reader forbear. The best article that was to appear in this number, written with incalculable care and much mental strenuousness, was in my overcoat pocket last night—and lo, the thieves broke through, and while I slept they carried off this best and onliest overcoat, together with such little jewelry as was lying ready to hand—and now I am not even able to tell the time. Alas, the perfidy of this world! If these miscreant burglars had only left me my stick-pin—but let us draw the veil. Fortunately the rest of this number was already in the hands of the printer.

Such is life!

* * *

A great National School of Architecture is to be founded by the Society of Beaux-Arts Architects.

The scheme is one of exceeding great importance because the work of training architects at the present time is done by the atelier system, one that supplements the practical but limited work done by the draughtsmen employed in the architect's office. The object is to establish an institution where the history, the theory and the practical application of the art of architecture may be studied in the manner it is done in Paris.

There is nothing superfluous about this movement; it would, indeed, fill a great void in this branch of the arts. The present system is entirely inadequate to the demands of an all-rounded profession. The hope expressed by Mr. Whitney Warren, the president of the Society which fosters this project, may be realized: that the standards of building may be raised, and a distinctive American style of architecture developed.

* * *

Several important art sales are to take place this season. The Heber R. Bishop collection, the Joseph Jefferson collection, the Blumenstiel collection and the Johnson collection are spoken of.

This brings up the oft-mooted demand for an auction place, where small collections can be disposed of. There are a number of places that damn a picture that is put up at auction there, by their name alone. There is great need for a clean, honest auction room of small dimensions, such as the Messrs. Ortgies & Co. used to conduct some years ago.

At present small collections have to be grouped together to make a respectable American Art Association sale, and this is not always desirable. There is an opening for some one in this line of business.

There seems to be an epidemic of thefts in the art world abroad. After the return of the Frans Hals, stolen from the museum in The Hague, we hear of the disappearance of a painting by El Greco, "The Crucifixion," from the Prado Museum. A valuable manuscript of Pius VII, containing the record of the Pope's imprisonment at Fontainebleau, has been stolen from the secret archives of the Vatican Library, as also a priceless manuscript by Beda from a London Library. An effort has been made to remove, with a chisel, a bas-relief of the Twelve Apostles, by Michael Angelo, in the Church of St. Lawrence, in the village of Casellina Torri, Italy. While a painting, on public exhibition in Paris, was recently mutilated.

It is to be hoped that this wave may not roll across the ocean, although the Duveen Bros. suffered the loss last month of some valuable miniatures which they had imported.

* * *

The "Art Notes" of Mr. W. Macbeth contains the following timely hint: "It is reported that Paris art dealers are arranging for the appointment of qualified experts to give opinions on doubtful pictures. They recognize the fact that their business is being injured by the large number of forged pictures wherewith the unwary American is so frequently swindled.

"The cabled report fails to give the names of the dealers in the new combination, so we are left in doubt as to whether innocent or guilty ones are in the movement. The latter class probably has the greater need of the 'expert' to assist it in caring for the rich American.

"In this big careless city some such co-operation is very much needed among reputable dealers. It should go much further, however, than 'experting' pictures, it should get closer to the root of evil and put behind prison bars the rascals who supply the forgeries and the dealers who market them. Both could easily be found, and it should not be difficult to procure for them their deserts."

* * *

It is now announced that the collection of Mr. Chas. L. Freer of Detroit, Mich., is about to be accepted by the Smithsonian Institution. It is about time that the liberality of this eminent art collector should be gratefully recognized by the trustees of this national gallery.

* * *

TO WILLIAM KEITH, PAINTER.

Here where the tired day steals out to sea—
 Past the tall guardians of the Golden Gate
 Down to the rim of Time, where rest doth wait
 Within the portals of Eternity—
 Dwelleth a wizard; cunning-handed he,
 With seer's insight, with poet's heart;
 And he hath seen and shown by every art
 The soul of color, and its mystery.
 To him the reaching oaks their glory show;
 'Tis his to learn, 'tis his to make us know
 The mystic beauty of the greenwood old;
 The promise of the hills; the valleys sweet;
 The golden wonder of a world complete;
 The glory of a vision yet untold!

—*Adeline Knapp.*